

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A welding shield gas for non-consumable electrode arc welding of a welding material comprising austenitic stainless steel having a Ca concentration not less than 1 wt.ppm, the welding shield gas comprising:

an inert gas and nitrogen gas, the concentration of the nitrogen gas being ~~15~~ to 95 vol%.

2. (Currently Amended) A welding shield gas for non-consumable electrode arc welding of a welding material comprising austenitic stainless steel having a Ca concentration not less than 1 wt.ppm, the welding shield gas ~~comprising~~consisting of:

an inert gas, at least one gas selected from the group consisting of argon, neon, and krypton; and

helium gas, the concentration of the helium gas being 35 to 95 vol%.

3.-4. (Canceled).

5. (Previously Presented) A welding shield gas according to claim 1, wherein the inert gas is argon gas.

6. (Previously Presented) A welding method for non-consumable electrode arc welding of welded material comprising austenitic stainless steel, the welding method comprising:

a step of using the welding shield gas according to claim 1.

7. (Currently Amended) A welding method according to claim 6, wherein the welding ~~method~~material is applied to a fixed tube welding, and further comprising a step of welding the welded material while it remains stationary while moving a welding torch.

8. (New) A welding method according to claim 6, the welded material comprising: at

least one of Al at a concentration not less than 10 wt.ppm, and Si at a concentration not less than 0.3 wt.ppm.

9. (New) A welding method for non-consumable electrode arc welding of a welding material comprising austenitic stainless steel, the welding method comprising welding a material comprising austenitic stainless steel using a welding shield gas comprising an inert gas, nitrogen gas, and helium gas, wherein the concentration of the nitrogen gas is not less than 1 vol% and less than 65 vol%, and the concentration of the helium gas is 35 to 95 vol%.

10. (New) A welding method according to claim 9, wherein a combined concentration of the nitrogen and helium is 35 to 95 vol%.

11. (New) A welding method according to claim 6, wherein the welding material has a thickness not more than 3 mm.

12. (New) A welding method according to claim 6, wherein a welding current is equal to or less than 100A.

13. (New) A welding method according to claim 6, wherein a welding speed is 50 to 150 mm/min.

14. (New) A welding method according to claim 6, wherein concentrations of each of Ca, Al, and Si in the welding material are in a range of:

$$0.42 \leq 1000 \times \text{Ca concentration (wt. \%)} + 20 \times \text{Al concentration (wt. \%)} + \text{Si concentration (wt. \%)}.$$

15. (New) A welding method according to claim 6, wherein concentrations of each of Ca, Al, and Si in the welding material are in a range of:

$$0.90 \leq 1000 \times \text{Ca concentration (wt. \%)} + 20 \times \text{Al concentration (wt. \%)} + \text{Si concentration (wt. \%)}.$$